

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 14392

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: ZACCAGNINI'S FUTURE INCREASINGLY QUESTIONED

SUMMARY: ZACCAGNINI'S FUTURE AS SECRETARY OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT (DC) PARTY CONTINUES TO PROVIDE MATERIAL FOR SPECULATION AND COMMENT. WHILE HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DC'S SUCCESSFUL ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN ARE RECOGNIZED, HE IS FAULTED FOR LACK OF LEADERSHIP STRENGTH AND ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY. ZACCAGNINI IS ALSO BURDENED WITH PERSONAL AND FAMILY HEALTH CONCERNS. SPECULATION ON A SUCCESSOR CENTERS ON MORO. NO CHANGE SEEMS IMMINENT, HOWEVER, SINCE A SHIFT SO SOON AFTER THE JUNE ELECTIONS AND DURING ANDREOTTI'S FIRST PARLIAMENTARY TESTS WOULD BE NEEDLESSLY DAMAGING TO THE DC'S IMAGE AND UNITY. END SUMMARY.

1. A FAVORITE SUBJECT FOR SPECULATION DURING THE POST-FERRAGOSTO PERIOD HAS BEEN ZACCAGNINI'S FUTURE AS DC PARTY SECRETARY. WHILE MOST OBSERVERS CREDIT ZACCAGNINI WITH GIVING THE PARTY'S ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN A MAJOR BOOST BY PROVIDING AN IMAGE OF SINCERITY AND PROBITY AS WELL AS THE PROMISE OF REFORM AND RENEWAL, EVEN HIS SUPPORTERS CONCEDE THAT HE HAD LITTLE GIFT FOR ORGANIZATION OR STOMACH FOR ASSURING PARTY DISCIPLINE. A KNOWLEDGABLE DC SOURCE FRIENDLY TO ZACCAGNINI TOLD US THAT THE

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DC SECRETARY SIMPLY DOESN'T HAVE IT IN HIM TO LAY DOWN THE LAW AND

IS CONSEQUENTLY INEFFECTIVE. IN ADDITION, HE IS BURDENED WITH PERSONAL AND FAMILY HEALTH PROBLEMS.

2. ON THE PARTY'S LEFT, UNHAPPINESS WITH ZACCAGNINI CENTERS ON THE RECONFIRMATION OF OLD CENTER-RIGHT LEADERS (EG. BARTOLOMEI/ PICCOLI) IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY WITHIN THE PARTY, AND THE RELATIVE LACK OF INFLUENCE ACCORDED THE FORZE NUOVE (FN) AND BASE FACTIONS IN THE ANDREOTTI CABINET. HAVING SUPPORTED ZACCAGNINI'S ELECTION AS SECRETARY, THE DC LEFT NOW REPROACHES ZAC FOR NOT DEFENDING ITS INTERESTS AGAINST PRESSURES FROM THE DOROTEI AND FANFANI FACTIONS. THUS, BASE LEADER DEMITA COMPLAINED THAT "NEVER HAS THE DC LEFT COUNTED FOR SO LITTLE IN THE PARTY AS AFTER ZACCAGNINI'S ELECTION."

3. THE DISSENSION ON THE LEFT SURFACED OPENLY AUGUST 23 WITH THE PUBLICATION OF A DECLARATION SIGNED BY EIGHT YOUNG FN AND BASE DEPUTIES (AMONG THEM, FRANCANZANI, MARTON, FORNI, AND SANZA) COMPLAINING THAT THE DC'S PROMISE OF REFORM AND RENEWAL WAS BEING THWARTED. ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT ATTACK ZACCAGNINI PERSONALLY, THEY CHARGED THAT THE SAME OLD GROUPS HAD BEEN MAINTAINED IN POWER, "FRUSTRATING THE EXPECTATIONS OF THOSE ON THE PERIPHERY FOR A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION."

4. GRUMBLINGS ARE ALSO EMANATING FROM THE PARTY'S RIGHT. SUSPICIOUS OF POSSIBLE HIDDEN UNDERSTANDINGS WITH THE PCI, SOME OLD DOROTEO DEPUTIES SUCH AS COSTAMAGNA AND EVEN SUCH FANFANIANI LOYALISTS AS SEN. CARROLA HAVE PUBLICLY WARNED THAT THEY WILL NOT NECESSARILY BE BOUND BY PARTY VOTING DISCIPLINE. THE YOUNGER GENERATION ON THE RIGHT VOICE THE SAME DOUBTS: NEWLY ELECTED MILAN DEPUTY DECAROLIS CLAIMS THAT "WE ARE ALREADY IN THE DANGER ZONE" WITH RESPECT TO DC-PCI RELATIONS. A YOUNG DOROTEO DEPUTY, MAZZOLA, ASSERTED THAT "ZAC'S LINE IS LIKE THE SHAPE OF A COKE BOTTLE, A MYSTERY."

5. THE NAME MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED AS A SUCCESSOR TO ZACCAGNINI IS MORO, PRESENTLY UNENCUMBERED WITH HIGH PARTY OR CABINET OFFICE. HIS NAME CROPS UP ALMOST DAILY IN PRESS STORIES AND IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS. ARNAUD (AUTONOMOUS GROUP LEADER), ON THE OTHER HAND, TOLD US HE CONSIDERS FORLANI A LIKELY EVENTUAL SUCCESSOR TO ZACCAGNINI. ALBEIT INDIRECTLY, FANFANI TOO HAS

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VOICED HIS SUPPORT FOR A CHANGE. WHILE FANFANI PRAISES ZACCAGNINI FOR DOING FOR THE DC WHAT POPE JOHN DID FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, HE REMINDS LISTENERS THAT "PAUL VI CAME AFTER JOHN XXIII.

6. THE MOST COMMONLY VOICED HYPOTHESIS IS THAT FANFANI WILL SOON STEP DOWN (POSSIBLY AT THE DC NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING IN LATE SEPTEMBER) FROM HIS POSITION AS DC PRESIDENT NOW THAT HE HAD

BEEN ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE. THIS WOULD ALLOW MORO TO RESUME AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE PARTY AS DC PRESIDENT. IN ORDER TO AVOID AN ABRUPT CHANGE, ZACCAGNINI WOULD STAY ON AS SECRETARY (PERHAPS UNTIL DECEMBER) BEFORE SWITCHING POSITIONS WITH MORO.

7. THE ZACCAGNINI TALK REACHED SUFFICIENT PROPORTIONS FOR ANDREOTTI (AN OPPONENT OF ZAC AT THE MARCH CONGRESS) TO TAKE NOTE OF IT IN A PRESS INTERVIEW, DECRY THE LOOSE TALK AS INJUROUS TO THE PARTY, AND PLEDGE HIS FULL SUPPORT FOR ZACCAGNINI'S CONTINUED LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY. FOR HIS PART, MORO (ON AN EXTENDED VACATION) HAS STUDIOUSLY AVOIDED ANY COMMENT. A DC SOURCE IN THE MOROTEO CAMP DENIES THAT MORO HAS SECRETARIAL AMBITIONS.

8. COMMENT: NO CHANGE IN THE PARTY SECRETARYSHIP APPEARS LIKELY IN THE NEAR TERM, HOWEVER. IT IS GENERALLY RECOGNIZED THAT THE PARTY'S IMAGE AND UNITY WOULD BE NEEDLESSLY DAMAGED IF ZACCAGNINI WERE TO STEP DOWN SO SOON AFTER THE JUNE ELECTIONS AND BEFORE ANDREOTTI'S MINORITY GOVERNMENT PASSED ITS FIRST PARLIAMENTARY TESTS. MOREOVER, ZACCAGNINI STILL DERIVES CONSIDERABLE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FROM HIS SELECTION LAST MARCH AS THE ONLY DC SECRETARY EVER ELECTED BY A NATIONAL CONGRESS, AND AS AND AS THE POPULAR SYMBOL OF THE "NEW DC." FINALLY, WHILE THERE ARE UNDOUBTEDLY CONCERNS AND TENSIONS WITH THE PARTY ARISING FROM THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION, THERE IS ALSO BROAD AGREEMENT THAT NO VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO ANDREOTTI/ZACCAGNINI LEADERSHIP PRESENTLY EXISTS.

9. STILL A CHANGE AT SOME FUTURE POINT REMAINS A POSSIBILITY, IF ONE IS TO HEED THE OLD ADAGE OF WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S FIRE. AT THAT TIME, ZACCAGNINI COULD GRACEFULLY STEP DOWN, CITING REASONS OF HEALTH OR FAMILY OBLIGATIONS, WITHOUT THE DISRUPTION SUCH AN ABRUPT CHANGE COULD CAUSE NOW. END COMMENT.  
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